

Des Moines Community

AMBLING AND RELIGION

BY THE

REV. J. GLASS

Author of "Coping, Conscience, and Moral Duty"

WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE REVEREND DEACON LORD PARNOOD, K.C.V.O.



This reviewer deals with gambling in its relation to history, systems, ethics, commerce, and economics, while its influence on character and social morality and religion are fully discussed. The proposed betting taxation is considered from various points of view and the Author suggests certain reforms which he claims would prove a stimulus to the gambling problem and contribute to the culture of the nation.



With the Anthon grateful
thanks for a joyful & fruitful
ministry.

Sept 83 71.16.

GAMBLING AND RELIGION

Gambling and Religion

BY THE

REV. J. GLASS,

Vicar of Leyton, and Rural Dean.

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With Foreword by

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Lord President of the Council, and First Chairman of
the National Assembly of the Church of England.

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*I affectionately inscribe this book
to the Hallowed Memory of*

THE RT. REVEREND J. E. WATTS-DITCHFIELD, D.D.,
*First Bishop of Chelmsford ;
Chairman of the Church of England Men's Society.*

“He being dead, yet speaketh.”

FOREWORD BY LORD PARMOOR

I HAVE been asked to write a few words of introduction to this book, written by Mr. Glass, the Vicar of Leyton, and Rural Dean.

Some time ago when I was present, by invitation, at the Diocesan Conference of the Chelmsford Diocese, a Resolution was adopted, condemning the proposal to give sanction to the principle of gambling by imposing a duty in order to raise revenue. With that resolution¹ I am entirely in accord. The evils incident to indiscriminate gambling as described by Mr. Glass, constitute a real danger to our social structure, and are a source of menace to our social morality. The criminal prosecutions reported in the Press are a constant witness to the fact that crime has often started either in the desire to obtain funds to engage in betting, or to meet betting losses.

¹Proposed by the Author.

It must not be thought that I am in a position to express an opinion on all the matters to which Mr. Glass refers. I have not the requisite knowledge or experience ; but it seems probable that the question of a betting duty will come to the forefront in political discussion, and I unhesitatingly range myself on the side of those who are opposed to deriving public revenue from a source so conducive to social immorality, and which holds out special temptations to young persons. There should be no compromise on such a question.

PARMOOR.

February 29th, 1924.

PREFACE

I HAVE recently delivered a course of Lectures to City men at the Church of St. Mary Aldermary, E.C. on the Betting and Gambling problem, and the interest evinced by those attending convinced me that there is a place for this publication. These short lectures have been arranged in order that the book may be useful to workers who are out for the moral and social welfare of the nation, and who strive to bring Christ into the social order. There may be a few points introduced which might not be strictly regarded as belonging to the particular section, but this is due to the request of certain members of my congregation who desired an opinion on the special point at that particular lecture. These points are chiefly connected with the third, fifth and seventh chapters. At the same time I am conscious of many defects, and lay not the least claim either to superiority or originality, for I am simply "*part of all that I met.*" I am persuaded that the

whole Christian Church must take a larger share in creating a healthier public opinion before we can deal effectively with the gambling evil. I shall therefore be profoundly thankful if these lectures will stir up others to a fresh study of the problem, that they may be better equipped to combat the evil, and to secure such legislation as will control and limit the "trade."

My grateful thanks and deep respect are offered to the Rt. Hon. Lord Parmoor for his valued interest and great kindness in writing the foreword. By doing so I am sensible of a great honour and a high service from one who is a great Christian and distinguished Statesman. My thanks are also due to several friends without whose practical sympathy I could not issue this work. Among others I owe a debt to the Rev. Principal Greenup, D.D., Robert A. Gordon, Esq., K.C. (Inner Temple), Herbert Upward, Esq., for reading through the MS., and to the Bishop of Chelmsford and H. C. Hogan, Esq., for helpful advice. I must not forget my own colleagues in the ministry and other friends—not least my wife—who have assisted me by sympathy and service, and have made it possible for me to find spare moments to revise these lectures for print in the midst of the many

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claims and calls in this great industrial parish. I am encouraged to remember that at least two¹ of my honoured predecessors have issued valuable work from within the hallowed walls of Leyton Vicarage and although I may not have attained I gladly follow after.

I commend this book to God and pray that it may do some little service to forward His Kingdom.

JAMES GLASS.

THE VICARAGE,
LEYTON, E.10.
April, 1924.

¹The Rev. John Strype, Vicar of Leyton, 1669-1737 (Historian).
The Rt. Rev. The Bishop of Barking, Vicar of Leyton, 1900-1907.

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SUMMARY OF BETTING AND GAMBLING

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GAMBLING AND HISTORY

“Examine history for it is philosophy teaching
by experience.”

Carlyle.

LECTURE I

GAMBLING AND HISTORY

“ But ye that forsake the Lord ; that prepare a table
for fortune ; that fill up mingled wine with destiny.”

Isaiah xlv 12 (R.V.).

LET us define our terms. What do we mean by gambling? The word is used in such vague and various ways that a definition is not altogether so simple. In our newspapers we sometimes read of gambling and at other times of gaming, but although the terms appear synonymous, the latter has a more limited meaning, whilst gambling covers the whole subject. Remembering this distinction we may define gambling as *the mutual attempt of two or more persons to deprive one another of their money or goods without giving a fair equivalent.* In an epigrammatic phrase gambling has been described as, “ The mode of transferring property without any intermediate good.”¹ These definitions may be taken as sufficiently correct, for they can be verified by experience and history. Mr. Lecky² tells us that “ gambling is a passion common to all latitudes and all stages of civilisation.” The ancient and oriental as well as the modern European have in time come under its influence. The habit has been

¹Dr. Johnson.

²*Democracy and Liberty.*

in practice more or less since the early days of civilisation. It existed in the ancient days, for there is an extant Hindu hymn which wails the woes of ruined gamblers. The classic story too, of Greece and Rome is not without the practice of this evil, and it is interesting to note that Roman law, enacted to correct it, still finds an echo in our judicial Courts: indeed a well known classical writer¹ links up thieves and gamblers together. There can be little doubt that the ancient Hebrew caught the habit from surrounding nations, and although at first, such a practice as the casting of lots was used in a strictly religious sense, yet there is abundant evidence from the writings of the prophets that in a later age the gambling evil had entered the social life. In early Christian times, as inscriptions show, the gambling practice existed, and at least one great Christian leader² waged war against it. Beginning in the East the evil gradually invaded the West until European nations came under its spell.

(I) THE HISTORY OF GAMBLING in this country goes back many centuries for as early as the twelfth century John of Salisbury speaks of it. At that time the gambling instinct was so common that in the first Crusade under Richard I an edict was put forth with strict regulations against it. No man in the Army was permitted to play any game for money; and for the time being the passion seemed to be curbed. At the *Renaissance* in the sixteenth century wider publicity was given to the evil, and although the habit was popular during the Elizabethan

¹Aristotle.

²Tertullian.

period, yet it was the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which witnessed gambling of an extraordinarily reckless and dissolute character. A certain aristocratic type seemed to have gone mad: estates were forfeited and fortunes lost, and family property became hopelessly encumbered. Gentlemen were not ashamed to stake their money against the most infamous of society. The "quality" were not ashamed of their base gambling associates. In fact so widespread was the evil in the eighteenth century that a member¹ of the Government of the day gambled for twenty-two hours in succession—his devotion to chance costing him £500 an hour. In his gambling craze he borrowed money from club waiters, and at length he saw his goods seized for execution. During this time gambling was the ruling passion of society in the Courts of Europe.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY opened with a more favourable aspect, for the Napoleonic Wars brought a marked cessation of the vice. Men's minds for the time being were occupied with more serious matters, but once the Wars were ended the evil again increased and spread with such rapidity that legislation was introduced periodically to strike at its worst forms. The Betting Acts of 1853 and 1854 which applied to Scotland as well as to England enacted that "no house, office, room or other PLACE shall be used for the purpose of the owner or occupier betting with persons resorting thereto." These Acts, undoubtedly, have done much to reduce the grosser methods of gambling but they are open to just criticism and

¹Charles James Fox.

have been the subject of much legal discussion. For instance, it has been held that "a stool and umbrella, a tree, but not an enclosure at a race course is a PLACE." It is somewhat difficult to understand this interpretation which appears extraordinary. The "resorting" must be physical, i.e., "not by letter or telegram," and all advertisements and circulars relating to betting houses are forbidden. These Gambling Acts are the bookmakers' chief stumbling block, for the customers can plead the Gamblers Act in Court to get absolved from all liabilities.

(2) DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY the pendulum swung round from the aristocrat to the democrat, and gradually the gambling habit showed itself amongst all classes of society. The "mutual bets" system of wagering, introduced into France in 1865, visited England and lived a short time with a chequered career of three or four years, for it is important to note that it never commended itself to the British public. A self registering machine was introduced on the British race course by a Spaniard named Oller, and the "pari-system" (as it was called) was adopted by certain bookmakers, but after a year or two the law stopped it. It is still used in France, in India, and in Australia. This system of betting which is called the "totalisator" consists of rows of offices near the stands in which particulars of the horses running in the race are exhibited. The backer gets his voucher for his money from the clerk and after the race the whole amount collected at the various offices is totalised and divided, a percentage having been deducted for administrations.

As soon as this has been done the money is divided and the prices to be paid to the winners are posted up. In France the profits are divided between the race fund and the State, but in British Colonies where the system is used, the race fund gets all the money. At the beginning of last century Paris was the greatest gambling centre in the world, and enormous profits were reaped from the gambling tables, which were closed down in 1839. Benezet, the celebrated gambling farmer, took his roulette wheels and cards to Baden-Baden, but Bismarck in 1872 wiped out certain gambling establishments from Germany and then Homburg and Wiesbaden became notorious centres. The concession at the former place was obtained by the two notorious brothers Blanc and their stakes were the highest permitted, no less than £480 being frequently staked on the turn of a card. But the Blanc brothers had already started business on the Mediterranean Coast at Monaco and Monte Carlo which are now the world's two famous gambling centres. It is reported that when the new concession at Monaco, and which holds good until April 1st, 1948, was signed, the frs. 500 share rose to frs. 4,770 which is extraordinary. The abolition of the gambling centres of Germany enormously increased the habit in Belgium, where Spa and Louvain became notorious gambling resorts; and towards the close of the last century Ostend became a serious rival of Monte Carlo. In 1902, however, both Chambers of the Belgian Parliament passed a law suppressing gambling throughout the country, and awarded Ostend a few million francs for the loss

of income. This left the field to Monte Carlo, Aix-les-Bains and Trouville, with Biarritz close behind.

(3) IN ENGLAND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY opened with an alarming increase in general gambling. The practice had become so serious that a Royal Commission was appointed in 1902 by Parliament to report upon it. The evidence showed that the race course had become completely under its power ; our English sports and amusements were being menaced by it ; commerce, character, life itself, were all more or less under its spell. In America, too, the increase of betting and gambling was as conspicuous as elsewhere. It had become so associated with sport that Congress had to deal with its suppression.

When the Great War broke out, it helped us to see more clearly the nature of this social evil. Viewed in the light of national efficiency, and the highest possible good of the man-power of the nation, we discovered its terrible character. In May, 1915, the President of the Board of Trade notified the restriction, for national purposes, of all racing except at Newmarket. The racing fraternity instantly set up a terrific howl against this war necessity, although the Empire urgently needed the use of the railways. The comments of the racing papers, if they had not been foolish, would have been anti-patriotic and scandalous. The result was that extra race meetings were held at Newmarket, and later in the year other races were held without railway facilities. Such is the power of the "trade!" Two years later, April, 1917, the Government intimated that all racing must stop for the good of the nation. This time it was

not a question of railway transit but of food and economy, and although the life of the nation was at stake, the selfishness of the gambling circle was again aggressive. Bookmakers and agitators were busy; public meetings were held and within a few weeks the Government disgracefully surrendered to the cries of this motley crowd, and a period of forty days' racing was permitted. Let me emphasise the point that twice during the Great War¹ the gambling "trade" in this country was sufficiently strong to defeat the claims of national efficiency and the vital necessities of the people. It is a dark story but not the whole, for after Armistice Day the first organisation in this country to be given pre-war privileges was the race meeting. These facts exhibit the sordid selfishness of the gambler and his disregard for the safety and well-being of the Nation.

(4) THE LESSON OF HISTORY IS OBVIOUS. The evil has been with us for centuries and frequently new legislation has been enacted to prevent the waste of life, the loss of time, and the money spent upon it. Parliament in 1808 appointed a Select Committee to deal with gambling. The Report gave an unqualified condemnation of it as "*being so radically vicious that your Committee feel convinced that under no system of regulation which can be devised will it be possible for Parliament to adopt it as an efficacious source of revenue and at the same time divest it of all the evils of which it has hitherto proved so fruitful a source.*" Nearly a century later (1902) a Select Committee appointed by the House of Lords investigated the

¹Times (May 11th, 1915).

increase of public betting amongst all classes. This Committee was not asked to deal with the moral aspect of betting but they went so far as to say "they deplored the spread of a practice which they considered opposed to the true interest of sport; injurious to the general community; and apt to degenerate into one of the worst and most mischievous forms of gambling."

Another Select Committee has issued its Report¹ in a volume which runs to nearly seven hundred pages, in which they have made a survey summarising the Gaming Law as it exists to-day. The Report adds that "the continual breaking of the Law by millions of people and the constant endeavour to avoid the police must have a most demoralising effect on character." We are forced to the conclusion that the verdict of history emphatically condemns betting and gambling as injurious to our highest interests and destructive of the moral, social and economic well-being of the Nation.

¹December, 1923.

GAMBLING SYSTEMS

" Whose game was Empires,
And whose stakes were thrones :
Whose table Earth;
Whose dice were human bones."

Byron.

LECTURE II

GAMBLING SYSTEMS

“ If thine eye be evil ; thy whole body shall
be full of darkness.”

St. Matthew vi, 23.

UNDOUBTEDLY the trade is tremendously well organised. Men, women, and children are all in it, and are subject to its power. Its dimensions can be understood when we consider the variety of people who practise it. Aristocracy and democracy are in it alike. A large number of gamblers in the Epsom week carry on their trade with a fashionable set at this racing resort. In contrast with this the master of a big workhouse has had to suppress gambling amongst the inmates, a number of whom had formed a betting ring ; whilst there have been serious complaints from the parents of children as to the gambling spirit within the school. The fact is our public institutions and schools, city offices and workshops, mills and mines, factories and fashionable resorts have been so completely captured by gambling that it seems almost impossible for the young worker to escape its abuses and temptations. The rich and poor, the busy and idle, the peasant and the peer, all gamble together ; but the *book-maker* is master of them all. It is a serious matter

that the habit has grown through professional gambling into what is now termed "the trade," and we shall indicate some of the best known methods and systems of betting and gambling which are in general use.

(1) BOOKMAKING. A man wishing to back a horse asks the odds and accepts or rejects as he wishes. If the bet is taken the bookmaker may see that it appears in the racing column of the evening paper, and it acts as a decoy to others. It is suspected, however, that in many cases in order to stimulate business, bets are quoted which have never been made. The figures shorten according to the public demand in backing a certain horse. If there is little demand the bookmaker increases the odds, but the betting market is regulated by the money, so that if a large number of people back a certain horse the odds gradually decrease until in many cases the bookmaker instead of laying odds is really taking them. In other words, he agrees to pay a lesser sum than he would receive from the backer if the horse lost.

(2) BETTING. This is of two kinds—"Post," when it does not begin until the number of horses is on the board; and "ante-Post," when it begins months before the race, as in the case of the Derby and the Oaks. In either case the bookmaker has his own knowledge, and not only holds the winning hand, but has the best idea of the relative value of the horse. On the other hand the man who bets is subject to deceptive influences. He reads racing news and listens to pieces of manufactured gossip,

and to the absurd pretence of the tipster who professes to be able to tell all about the winner, although it might be reasonably supposed that this beneficent humbug, if he possessed the knowledge, would assuredly use it for himself. These fairy tales frequently appeal to the folly of the amateur and the blindness of the ignorant, who easily fall in the trap. Betting in itself is not illegal (which sounds curious) but if the backer deposits his stake with the layer in advance the transaction is illegal. What is known as Cockburn's Act, 1853, the principle of which was extended to Scotland in 1874 drove those bookmakers who were dealing with the ready money public to Boulogne and, later, to Holland. The Anti-Gambling League has tried in recent times to make these Acts applicable to bookmakers who betted with ready money in the ring, and in the action of Hawke *versus* Dunn went through every legal stage, until at length the pursuer was defeated on a technical point and retired from the field. Towards the end of the nineteenth century a new form of betting was introduced which has revolutionised the older system. This new method is called "S.P.," or starting-price betting. Most people are unable to attend race meetings, but they can by this method, none the less, bet fully through the papers which wire the price all over the country and entangle thousands of unwary folk into this very unsafe business.

(3) LOTTERIES. Another method of gambling is the lottery system. This is illegal, and the State no longer uses lotteries for financial purposes. Some of us remember how quickly the law suppressed what

was popularly known as "the missing word" competition which, although apparently innocent in practice, was declared illegal in principle; Judicial interpretation showed that it was a matter of chance and not of skill. The history of the lottery system is interesting inasmuch as for 250 years it was a feature of national life. We find it in the middle of the sixteenth century but after a long experience it was condemned in 1699 by an Act of Parliament. However, eleven years later, in the reign of Queen Anne, lotteries were revived and lived for more than a century. But it was the experience of the State that in spite of the large sum which came into the national revenue, the moral evils outweighed the money, and on the recommendation of a Special Committee, whose Report strongly condemned the evils of the system, Parliament, in 1826, passed an Act abolishing lotteries and the system was brought to an end.

(4) SWEEPSTAKES. This is another mode of betting in which a number of people contribute a certain stake; a horse being assigned to each of them by lot and the backer of the winning horse gets the whole. If more persons take part (which is generally the case) than horses running, they draw blank, and their stake is lost. The sweepstake is one of the most dangerous and insidious forms of gambling and is carried on to an enormous extent, especially amongst women. I have known recent incidents where large sums of money have been lost on the Calcutta and other sweepstakes by people who cannot afford it. The whole system of sweepstakes is a discredit to the country. In business houses,

offices, schools, and other institutions it has become a curse to thousands of our young people.

(5) GAMING HOUSES. In London there are districts given over to gaming houses. During the Great War hundreds of these gambling dens existed both West and East, and although Army Orders strictly prohibited all officers from entering them, the evil still continued. These so-called Clubs are the enemies of social life and national efficiency. Many young men frequenting them have lost their character and left them almost ruined. These clubs are illegal, and come under the Betting Act which makes it an offence to open or use "any house, office, room, or other place for the purpose of betting and resorting thereto, or for the purpose of receiving money for the purpose of betting."

(6) GAMING MACHINES. These automatic contrivances produce young gamblers. They are generally placed in an attractive way in small sweet shops where children resort to spend their pennies. Recently in the slum district of a big city, several hundred copper coins which represented a day's gambling proceeds from ragged children, were found by the police in one of these machines. For humane reasons one might expect that the children would not be exploited by the gambler, but the reverse is the case. We are glad, however, to note that the authorities are alive to the evil. A few years ago an appeal case in the King's Bench Division declared these machines illegal, but efforts have since been made to modify this form of gambling to defeat the law. The matter needs careful watching.

(7) RAFFLES AND DRAWINGS are a common and undesirable form of gambling. These are undoubtedly linked up with fraud and in cases which appeared before the Courts it has been shown that the prize winners have been cheated of their prizes, and in other instances the supposed prize winners were fictitious. This form of gambling is sometimes used in connection with religious and charitable work. There are numerous bazaars attended by people who would not stake on a horse race, but unhesitatingly enter a raffle. The desire may be created by the possibility of a good bargain, to get as much as you can for a small outlay, or the good object may be considered to be sufficient justification for the experiment. In either case surely it is not worthy of the Church of Christ to endorse gambling by using it to get money for spiritual work. It is a blunder if not a crime, for the Christian Church to assist the gamblers in defying the law of the land. She must set her house in order and see to it that discreditable methods of raising means for Christ's work should not be used.

(8) THE COUPON SYSTEM, which is largely used in our great industrial centres by bookmakers' touts and agents. The coupon may be left without any indication of the name of the bookmaker issuing it. This system is closely associated with the game of football; the result being that the game is vitiated by the gambling evil and has become a commercial speculation.¹ This is a real danger to the football

¹ "Players themselves have taken part therein: Coupon Betting on football has become a serious menace to the game." (See Report, Football Association Commission, 1913.)

field which is becoming as bad as the race course.

(9) THE PRESS. There is a certain kind of press which lives upon professional betting. Some years ago a well-known public man¹ challenged the controlling shareholders of a London evening paper. His challenge was of a moral character, and in their reply the Directors said, "We detest betting; we spend large sums on the Anti-gambling movement but we publish betting tips because we cannot sell our evening paper without them."² This bears its own comment. It is a national disgrace, too, that both the telegraph and telephone services of the State are at the gamblers' disposal, for bookmakers and turf agents boast of their advantages and preferential treatment. It is nothing short of a scandal that the State should offer special benefits to a system which is demoralising the social order. Before the Special recent inquiry³ a bookmaker declared that at the present time he was running his trade on thirty-four telephone lines and received six thousand telegrams a year. An enormous quantity of betting literature is continually pouring through the Post Office, and although I never bet I receive these communications at regular intervals. Mr. Justice Darling has said that "Any persons desirous of betting have only to avail themselves of the facilities of His Majesty's Post Office." Such are the insistent and impertinent systems of the modern bookmaker. Surely it is time to take action

¹Sir Edward Fry.

²*Spectator*, October, 1911.

³*The Times*, July, 1923.

to grapple with this growing evil for the sake of the well-being of the country.

NOTE.—There has been recently introduced into this country a new system of gambling—Mahjong—which has come from China.¹ “From time to time Mahjong has been *specifically* forbidden by law in China. For the Chinese law forbids all forms of gambling, but the vice is so deeply ingrained that legal restrictions are of little avail.” There appears to be a subtle danger both moral and physical in this form of gambling.

¹*The Times*, January 25th, 1924.

GAMBLING AND ETHICS

“It is some compensation for great evils
that they enforce great lessons.”

LECTURE III

GAMBLING AND ETHICS

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another."

Romans xiii, 8.

THE question has been asked as to whether we can discover the real ground or principle for the transference of property which follows the gambling transaction. Professor Mackenzie¹ in his interesting book on "Ethics of Gambling," uses an illustration something of this kind. A man takes a coin and tossing it up, declares that he who guesses the side uppermost will have the right to possess the property. At this point it is taken for granted that neither he nor anyone else has any control over the motion of the coin, nor the law that determines its fall. To each of them it is a matter of absolute chance. Now chance or luck is a kind of relative term defined by the limits of our knowledge, for any event can only become a matter of chance when the manner and time of its taking place lie beyond our range of knowledge. For instance, the sunrise of to-morrow or the new moon are not matters of chance for they can be exactly calculated and the reasons of the phenomena are known. But, in gambling, whether in the race course or the roulette table,

¹*The Ethics of Gambling.*

you are faced with chance because no one can determine the result of the one or the final position of the other. It is quite evident, therefore, that you cannot gamble on anything where chance is not present. People do not bet upon the rising of the sun, but they bet upon horses, pigeons, football, cards, roulette balls and many other things where chance is present. The real point is, whether there be any moment of time when chance ceases to be the sole reason for the passing of property in a gamble. Here, it is claimed by some that there may be certain forms of skilful gambling which rightly receive a suitable reward, but it is not possible to discuss this point without reference to the principles on which most gambling proceeds. Considering this point we take into account not only the winner but the loser and what was in both their minds, not after the result was known, but before the bet was made. What do the winner and loser say with regard to the conditions in which they agreed to bet? If the loser had the least idea that the man who made the bet with him had more knowledge than he himself had, surely he never would have made it: if he did, then he was a fool. But, if the winner had that knowledge which he knew a loser had not, then he ought to have said so. He was taking an unfair advantage of the other: his gain was the other's loss and he knew it before he began, and this is not playing the game. Looking at the question from different points of view, all gambling is made on mere chance; and it is upon this principle the transaction of gambling is based.

(i) RACING REASONS. It has been discussed whether the thoroughbred horse and sport itself could exist without the race course. The pretence that the race course improves the breed of horses is an old delusion, and is not worth serious thought. Everybody knows that the high standard of the horse does not depend upon betting. To talk in this way is as foolish as it is fallacious. The approved standard of our fine carthorse, the breed of our cattle, sheep and other stock does not depend upon gambling. Go to the Royal Agricultural Show and see whether it is not a fact that the standard of this stock is as high as that of the race horse ; yet men do not gamble on sheep, pigs and goats, for the standard is attained without it. Even if the contrary could be proved what about the standard of the betting man ? For a man is better than a sheep. Watch the gambling dens and note the type of men who frequent them. See the deplorable results upon the intellectual and moral character. Was not a great Prime Minister¹ correct when he summed up the gambling trade as " a vast engine of national demoralisation " ?

(ii) WHY DO PEOPLE GAMBLE ? The truth is that all gambling must come under the head either of profit or pleasure. Now what are we to say about these ? With regard to profit, surely there is no harm in making money when we obtain it by legitimate means and use it as a Divine stewardship. The acquisition of money is not in itself wrong, but only the love of money when men use it in a selfish

¹ Lord Beaconsfield.

manner, and it so becomes the root of evil. Moreover, the instinct of lawful profit may be a motive to commerce and an incentive to progress ; but it is quite another thing when a man allows his money-making to degenerate into avarice. This is exactly what takes place in gambling. It is man's greed ; his desire ; his longing to be rich at the expense of others ; his taking and not giving in return ; it is this which makes the profit of betting a vicious and degenerate thing. Besides, there is nothing good in the world which is indebted to the gambling habit, and progress owes nothing whatever to it. The City commerce owes nothing to gambling, for its prosperity depends upon productivity ; and the warehouse goods and factory material have not been increased in weight or size through gambling.

(iii) METHODS OF MAKING MONEY. Ask City men what are the chief methods of getting wealth and the modes of acquiring property. Generally speaking they will tell you that they are summed up into two great laws, viz., the law of labour and the law of love. There may be secondary and subsidiary methods, but they are contained in these two laws which sum up the right and legitimate principles for social and industrial life. These govern the moral, mental, and manual capacity of every worker and his work.

THE LAW OF LABOUR. Take, for instance, the case of the producer who puts his skill, time and character into his work which he places upon the market. It can be bought by you, if you need it, but in return you must give the producer a fair and

just equivalent. The buyer and the seller must be satisfied that they have made a just and lawful exchange. Now, the man who acquires labour without giving a just equivalent is unscrupulous and dishonest. On the other hand, the man who takes the money without giving back a just equivalent is likewise dishonest. This law of fair exchange should save the market from the curse of sweated labour and the evil of shoddy work. With regard to gambling, what I want to know is, what place does the gambler find in the law of labour? What toil does he bestow upon his work? What equivalent does he return? Is it a sufficient equivalent for the unfortunate victim to learn that he has lost his money? Is it a sufficient exchange to know that everything has gone to the bookmaker, and that his own wife and family must face starvation? This is a strange equivalent for the outlay, and a poor comfort for a man who is a bankrupt. Most emphatically, gambling has no place whatever in the law of labour.

THE LAW OF LOVE. What do we understand by love in this question? We mean that this law touches every gift which a man gives, from the copper to the beggar right up to the big hospital donation. This mode of giving rests entirely on the principle of love and brotherhood, which takes the same place in morals as exchange does in economics. What place is found in the law of love for the business of the gambler? Did you ever hear of a bookmaker giving back all his ill-gotten gain to the man he has ruined on the principle of brotherhood? Can you

classify his terms in the realm of love? Those who know anything about the bookmaker know too well that this is not his character. On the contrary he is selfish and hard, and there is no place found in his evil business for the principle of love. In short, in all gambling the law of labour is inoperative, and the law of love is ignored. The transaction is unjust, for exchange is disowned and it is undoubtedly outside right and legitimate modes of acquisition.

(iv) GAMBLING FOR PLEASURE AND AMUSEMENT
What about this? Surely there is no harm in a rational desire for amusement and recreation, for this is a natural instinct! We are not meant to be kill-joys who silence the song of the birds or rob life of healthy pleasure. Let me ask what are the right elements of amusement?

(1) It must promote a higher end. (2) It must be quite free from injury or pain to others. When an amusement ends in itself, it ceases to be innocent, and nothing can be innocent that diminishes another's pleasure, or increases another's pain. For these two reasons we hold that gambling is not a right amusement but is an unrighteous and selfish one. It may be true that in some cases the loss is not large and the injury patiently borne, for when people gamble they stand to lose as well as to win, so that they ought not to grumble. Nevertheless, the pain and disappointment remain. Gambling, therefore, cannot be regarded as a right and legitimate amusement.

The close of the Great War brought an increase of gambling. People to-day, under the cloak of

pleasure and profit, are gambling about all sorts of things. Our splendid English sports are being vitiated by a habit which ought to have no relation with them whatever. Gambling is without any justification which can stand a serious investigation. I have never met a gambler who could honourably defend his position. I have never known a good man who has spoken in defence of it. It is opposed to the law of brotherhood and love, for the man who loves his brother will not live to rob him. The Spirit of Love is the Spirit of Christ. How can a gambler be a Christian or a Christian a gambler?

GAMBLING AND COMMERCE

"Men speculate on everything even on famine."

Prince Eugène.

LECTURE IV

GAMBLING AND COMMERCE

“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

Philippians ii, 4.

THE question of gambling in commercial life presents its peculiar difficulties. We may expect this, since money, which is the motive of gambling, touches business at all points, and is absolutely linked up with commerce. Professor Mackenzie¹ lays it down that methods of commerce are based upon the recognition of some elements of risk in business. The problem therefore needs carefully stating. The *Spectator* puts it in this way : “ If you buy corn with a hope of a rise which is of the essence of commerce why may you not stake a similar bet on the turn of a card ? In either case the wrong turn may ruin you ; yet the one transaction, supposing you can pay the difference, is moral, the other is not.” At first sight we must confess that we seem up against a difficulty ; but this will vanish when we recall that in gambling, both parties who took the bet are as far as possible making the matter one of chance. Neither gambler wishes to know beforehand how the card will turn up, otherwise he would be

¹*The Ethics of Gambling.*

cheating and would spoil the game. The corn merchant, on the other hand, by the transaction is carrying out a vital function for society, and at the present state of the market he is being paid for the honest working of this function by means of what he calls his profit. We can see that this profit lies in the rise in the price by which he can sell above that at which he bought. He claims this as the legitimate tax for the public to pay as an equivalent for the labour and responsibility involved. Contrast these two cases and we find (1) Whilst the two men risked their money and aimed at making more, the one did it in the discharge of a solemn social trust which was for the good of the community ; the other for the desire of sensation and pleasure, and for increasing his own wealth on the gambler's conditions. (2) While the one works hard to keep free from risks by the application of forethought and wisdom, the other adjusts his conditions which increase his own risks as well as the risks of others. (3) The merchant aims at discharging his function by using his knowledge to eliminate chance and to reduce uncertainty to the minimum, the other tries to introduce chance into his gamble, forethought and wisdom having no place in it. In fact, the merchant does not wish to risk his money at all ; but the other is prepared to risk all, knowing not whether he gains or loses. The real difference between these two men who are opposed to each other lies in the *principle* and the *desire*. In the one case the desire and the principle behind the transaction were to reduce the element of risk to the smallest dimension ; while

in the other, the gambler will move in the sphere of the greatest uncertainty, without regard to the gift of intelligence. It is enough for him that chance demands him to enter, and his passion is to follow.

(i) A RIGHT SPECULATION. Undoubtedly there is such a thing, for, as we have just seen, there is a fair and legitimate speculation in which a wise and careful forecast is made. Money may be invested so that the increase of production may prove a public benefit. The wholesale and large retail traders honestly make money by speculative business when they buy for a rise. This implies a careful study of the markets and the conditions which govern the prices of commodities which will enable a far-seeing man to make more money than he would otherwise do by buying for his needs as they occur. In the stress of modern competition this advantage so gained is frequently thrown away by under-selling the market, which is not fair to the other traders. Any man is honestly entitled to extra profit which promptitude and foresight gained for him, but he should keep his profits in reserve for losses which may follow. Generally speaking the difference comes in relation to social function. *Speculation* may involve gambling when the buyer is aware that he is serving no real social function, for he has entered, not to facilitate the distribution, nor to supply commerce with necessary capital, but merely to grasp a nominal and short-lived ownership for a few hours or days, hoping that by chance during his transaction the prices may rise. Every legitimate business is burdened by this class of speculator, both

in our markets and on the Stock Exchange. He is a gambler without a "social conscience," separated from the real merchant by the laws of honour. For a man who, in order that he may get rich, will corner the market to make another buy at a price that will ruin him must be termed a dishonourable man.

(ii) A WRONG SPECULATION. There are men who gamble away both life and property. They buy what they cannot pay for, and sell what they never had. Speculation of this kind is gambling and is a great hindrance, for it does not increase the nation's wealth by one farthing. Quite recently in several well known instances transactions such as these have involved hundreds of City people in financial disaster. We might go further than this and say that when financial resources do not permit of the purchase being completed a man has no right to run the risk of speculating. Indeed it is a debatable question, whether, should financial resources allow a purchase to be completed, speculation beyond the particular demands of production or distribution may be termed gambling. The gain upon such speculation is a dishonest tax upon the community. Such a speculation is injurious to commerce itself. To some City men, gambling will sound vulgar but *certain* Stock Exchange speculation wears a refined mask and has been raised to the dignity of a clever art. Some who practise it, speak of it as the dynamic of commerce. I have heard men who are professional speculators condemn the bookmaker when in very deed they were engaged in the same department under a different name; and I have known cases

where men on the Stock Exchange, who were rich speculators on one day, were in penury and want the next. The man who gambles, who makes Chance his God, who is a victim of inevitable risk, may laugh merrily over present luck, but his coming losses will rush him into madness and suicide. The fact is, there is no stability in this method and no security in this way of making money. The man who will accept a principle so shifty and so insecure as a working hypothesis of life is a fool. Then there is the "floating" of certain companies by a speculation which is an organised swindle. The Post Office is often full of this kind of prospectus being sent by post, and its make-up is highly attractive, with its promise of dishonest dividends. Many read its conditions but may fail to observe its rotten principles, by which simple-minded people are caught, and anxious widows are victimised. Some people put their trust in well-known public names which are used to decoy the public. These gentlemen are apparently serving on a directorate which is the creation of scoundrels. We need not stop to mention names, or to tabulate particular cases. We may probably recall within the range of our own experience some such instances. No sincere or honourable man will give his name for such a purpose.

(iii) ITS EFFECT ON COMMERCE. It is computed that some hundred millions of pounds directly and indirectly change hands every year through gambling. Have we realised the terrible loss to trade, for this money is tied up and inoperative for legitimate business? To say the least, it is an undesirable

waste and an enemy to the National Budget. Yet this is but one element of the effect of gambling upon commerce. Take another—the fact of bankruptcy. Several of the financial disasters in the City have been traced to gambling. During the first fifteen years of this century about six hundred bankruptcies, some of an alarming character, involving the ruin of thousands of homes, have been registered and published from the Law Courts Reports by the Anti-Gambling League, and were stated to be due to gambling. During the same period embezzlements, etc., numbering nearly nine hundred are credited to gambling, while suicides through financial disaster brought on by the same vice reached nearly two hundred. These cases have been directly traced through the Courts, and it is possible that indirectly there are nearly *three times as many cases* which have not been published. No wonder that *The Times* has counselled us we are “in the presence of an evil which is of National moment.” The whole question must be squarely faced. Stock Exchanges need to be purified, for the gambling vice is bad for the Country and destructive of the best of commerce. We question how far “time bargains, option, and margin speculations” are necessary for the prosperity of commerce or are legitimate at all? The public have their share in this business, for the Stockbroker depends for his living upon gambling operations entered into by other people. This applies to all kinds of gambling, for “popular betting cannot be carried on by individual bets.”¹ A

¹Lord Sands.

professional organised Trade is chiefly responsible for the popularity of betting. The man who takes the gamble to get rich quickly is a danger not only to commerce, but to his country. His moral integrity is impaired and it affects the society in which he moves. He is a contradiction of good citizenship for he lacks the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-control. His methods in the long run lead to an indolence which has a bad effect on efficient industry. One of our leading financiers¹ of to-day puts it in striking words, "It is generally admitted that the atmosphere created by the general spirit of gambling leads to extravagance, a general lessening in self-control and a reduction in individual effort to save and to work. It is my conviction that even if a man gets his money by gambling it is at the expense and possibly the ruin of others." We have seen it, and marked that in the long run it did no good. Even if he does get money, when death claims him his ill-gotten gain may buy him a gorgeous funeral, but it cannot bribe the Angels to carry his soul into God's Paradise.

¹Sir Robert Kindersley.

GAMBLING AND ECONOMICS

“ There is nothing that brings more people into misery and ruin than the work of the betting agents.”

LORD ALVERSTONE (*Lord Chief Justice*).

LECTURE V

GAMBLING AND ECONOMICS

"Working with his hands the thing that is good."

Ephesians iv, 28.

MR. LECKY,¹ one of the ablest writers which last century produced, considered that with gambling, like all habits which cause pain and injury to others, it is difficult to define the attitude of the law towards it. Its chief root lies in craving for excitement, for there are chords of nature that must be touched in some manner which will result in a thrill of emotion even when it is far from pleasant. This is seen in the ancient Roman Empire from the brutal joys of the Coliseum. In Spain we see it in the bull fight, in France in the duel, and in England, in a somewhat different aspect, in the prize fight. It is to this coarser element in human nature that gambling powerfully appeals. It is strange, however, that pleasure and amusements, quite innocent in themselves, become the sphere of the gambling vice, the reason for this being that they become the means of conveying excitement and creating emotion. To these, gambling adds passion and sensation, and so, many people resort to it

¹*Democracy and Liberty.*

in spite of the high price of tension and suffering to be paid afterwards.

The published Report of the Select Committee¹ provides some startling features. From the evidence it is gathered that the gambling business was of such vast dimensions that the organisation to defeat police vigilance had been prepared to a very marvellous degree. Women were betting to a very large and increasing extent, and in the factories and mills they were forced by foremen who were bookmakers' agents to bet or lose their jobs. Homes were canvassed between nine and eleven o'clock in the forenoon and women induced to bet out of the housekeeping money. Bookmakers would, and did bet with children, and in a London Elementary School boys of ten and twelve were buying tips and betting in sums of 3*d.* and 6*d.* with them. A yearly turnover of £200,000,000 may be safely assumed. An estimate of the number of bookmakers is four thousand credit and race course, and six thousand street bookmakers. It may be of some interest at this point to say something about the history of this professional "trader."

(1) THE RISE OF THE BOOKMAKER. In the earlier days those who wished to satisfy this craze for gambling found difficulty in always finding people ready to wager, and this very difficulty had produced that undesirable member of society whom we call the bookmaker. He was quick to see that if you placed your money against a number of horses and did your business in a shrewd way that you were

¹November, 1923.

bound to get a good thing out of it. So the bookmaker (as he came to be called) started his sordid business and from that day to this has held an enormous advantage for himself. He is shrewd and cunning, and many of his clients are precisely the opposite. He benefits from their mistakes as well as from the public limitations and those other "accidents" which shut out success, and thus experience shows how the bookmaker grows rich and the backer loses his money. This is no marvel when you keep in mind the circumstances of the deal. For one thing, he regulates the odds and he does this often by carefully watching the desire of backers to put their money on certain horses. Nobody knows better than he does that the man who bets will be deceived by what are called "stable secrets," for such a thing can scarcely be said to exist to-day, and if it does the bookmaker is better furnished than most people to tell the chances of the horses, as he is in touch with all the stables. The press report of a trial gallop of "Pondoland" or "Papyrus" or any other horse is of very little value except to provide copy for the racing columns of the papers.

(2) WHAT ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF GAMBLING ON THE ECONOMIC QUESTION? Money wasted on gambling loses its value. Men who get their money by the gambling method are less conscious of its value, not having acquired it by the laws of exchange. What costs nothing is generally worth nothing. During the war, when wages were inflated and mere boys and girls were receiving enormous wages in munition work, we know what were the results.

People forgot the standard value of money, and an extravagant system of living was set up ; bad habits were acquired, and we are feeling the effect to-day. Those who are acquainted with the munition centres know what I mean. Now, something of this kind exists in the gambling world. A man by a stroke of chance makes £20 at a race ; another makes £20 by honest work. The former knows nothing of money value and misses the true joy and satisfaction which the latter gets from hard and honest toil. Undoubtedly there can be no place for real joy or satisfaction in the gambler's life, for, as Herbert Spencer puts it, " His money is gain without merit and gain through another's loss."

Industry owes nothing to gambling. Our national commerce is based, not so much on finance, as upon industry. It is true that we are a nation of "shopkeepers," and we are not ashamed of it, for its value was apparent during the critical years of the war, when steady industry emphasised its own importance. Betting and gambling injures the industry upon which the nation ultimately depends. During the Great War gambling was the cause of serious waste of energy at Birmingham, Sheffield, Coventry and other munition centres. Munitions were urgently needed at the front, but the gambler was the enemy at the base. Before a munition tribunal, 1916, it was stated the amount of time lost in one month was nearly 40,000 hours, gambling being the chief cause for this unwarrantable waste. Workers had been actually found gaming on their machines, wasting their own time and that of others. Other

tribunals held at various centres shewed the same serious results. At one of these a well-known industrial¹ leader stated that "gambling was raging in the large munition centres in the country, workers sometimes losing the whole of their week's wages." The pity of it is that the evil was prevalent among lads and girls, and the temptation was no doubt largely due to the unusually high wages. We are still reaping the seed sown which has produced the habit. Alas! The habit may become a character, and the danger is lest we permit it to determine our destiny.

(3) GAMBLING STRIKES AT LABOUR. Industry and thrift go together, and gambling is the enemy of them both. We are living in times when the worker expects greater consideration, and it is becoming more generally recognised that every worker should have a greater share in the profits, and most of us will allow that this method is a wise and just one. Having regard to the social and financial future of our country, many of us who sympathise with the workers' point of view are anxious to protect him from the temptations and abuses of the gambling vice. A modern labour leader² says, "I have never found a gambling man yet who is a thrifty man." No worker can forget the straight and manly statement of Mr. Arthur Henderson that "gambling is a greater foe to labour than all the forces of capitalism." Many labour leaders see that betting is a foe

¹Sir William Clegg, Sheffield Munitions Tribunal, December 27th, 1915.

²Mr. Will Thorne, M.P.

of democracy and for this reason the labour party voted against the recent proposal with regard to Premium Bonds. At the Select Committee appointed to make enquiry on this subject two of the greatest employers in the country referred to the gambling evil, the one stating that he regarded it as absolutely necessary to prohibit all gambling in the works, the other that the gambling in his works was the most pernicious influence that he had to deal with. No worker can afford to practise gambling, and no financial enterprise can afford to tolerate it. No City man who requires a worker will be satisfied with a man who bets. Suppose, for a moment, I recommend to a City house as head of some department a man in whom I have a personal interest. I write a letter stating what an excellent man he is, capable, and efficient in his work. I have known him for many years but there is one thing I ought to tell them, that he is sometimes given to take a "flutter" on horse racing. What do you think the reply would be? Can you imagine any City firm enlisting the co-operation of a man like that? A short time ago, a manufacturer told Canon Peter Green, of Manchester, that it would pay him to give a dividend of ten per cent. to stop betting because of bad workmanship, lost time, spoilt material and friction. "These things," said he, "cost twice that, so that the normal output is twenty per cent. deficit." Gambling poisons social life, for it unfits men to discharge their responsibility. The economic value of a nation is the character of the worker. The men and women of the nation are its greatest assets and

“the boys and girls are its wings.” For this reason the question of gambling is most serious. Christ emphasised the value of individual life and one of the chief lessons of the War is the value of the individual to the nation. It is just here that the vice of gambling, with its selfish greedy spirit, shows itself as a foe to the nation’s social life. In the early days of the War a great democratic paper¹ warned the nation of this danger. The gambler lives in another world, “remote, unhelpful, and indifferent,” and it seems as if a large section of the press contrives to keep him there. This is seen at ordinary times from the large space given by these newspapers to racing news. In their judgment there is more importance centred on to-morrow’s races than on questions of national importance. The crowd of all sorts and conditions of people who read racing news indicate that they are blind to their social duty. The power of the women’s franchise, with its enormous opportunities of service to the nation, is of greater value when we consider our communal and civic life from this point of view.

(4) GAMBLING IN FAMILY LIFE. This is the most serious of all. To injure the family is to strike the nation in its most vital part. Everything which sanctifies human life is bound up in the family idea. To keep the nation strong her homes must be kept pure. What are we to say of an evil which destroys the foundation of family life? The man who spends his money on racing cares little about bread for the children. I have known a woman who stripped

¹*Manchester Guardian.*

her children of their boots and clothes to pawn for money to put upon the "Grand National." I saw the children almost naked, crying in the bitter cold.

A cashier employed in a City firm who had a happy home began betting. One morning the Director told me that the cashier had been missing for three days and his accounts showed a serious deficit through gambling. Three weeks after, I read a letter written from this poor unfortunate fellow to his wife. It was sent from Paris where, after posting it, he committed suicide. I shall never forget the words of that letter. Is it any wonder that those who know the curse of gambling want to go and fight it?

(5) WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN? Are they not a most valuable part of the economic life of the nation? Some weeks ago I read in *The Times*¹ of a bookmaker's house in Kentish Town concerning which the police stated that during six days no fewer than 257 men, 30 women and 194 children went there with betting slips. Instances might be multiplied but we cite this particular example as a typical one. Try to realise what the effect of gambling must be on the boys and girls who frequent such places! The money part of gambling is serious, but the moral part is a thousand times worse. The present age demands good citizenship. England needs it. For God's and the Country's sake let us shun this evil and shake ourselves free from the influence of gambling.

¹October, 1923.

GAMBLING AND CHARACTER

“ The more practised the gambler ; the worse the man.”
Ovid.

LECTURE VI

GAMBLING AND CHARACTER

“ Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit.”

St. Matthew vii, 17.

“ **O**F all the ungentlemanly habits into which you can fall, the vilest is betting. It unites nearly every condition of folly and vice ; you concentrate your interest upon a matter of chance instead of upon a subject of true knowledge. All incidents of egotism are in this, and so far as love of excitement is complicated with the habit of winning money, you turn yourselves into the coarsest sort of tradesman : those who live by speculation.” Such are the words of Ruskin. Without reserve he believed that the gambling habit injures both the winner and the loser. Like a pendulum the gambler swings between nervous excitement and deadly re-action. Whether he wins or loses gambling leaves him poorer than it found him, for in either case he is losing his manhood and character. In this lecture we shall try to indicate how this becomes apparent both in the individual character and in social life.

(I) INJURIOUS TO SOCIAL LIFE. There are those who regard betting and gambling as necessary to sport and amusement. On the contrary, when

gambling is associated with sport and recreation its influence is unmistakeably unhealthy and bad. For an illustration we have only to think of it in relation to some popular game. Football, especially in the North, is perhaps the most democratic and popular game of to-day; yet there is a growing danger that through betting the football field may be lowered to the level of the race course. We are glad that the Football Association is doing what it can to mend matters, but the fact still remains that the riotous scenes created by gambling hooligans¹ who frequent certain football matches are a disgrace to English sport. *The Times* described a recent race course scene, "With the holiday crowds come those gangs of confidence men, pickpockets and criminals of all sorts who find a rich harvest on special occasions of this kind." This description contains types of character which frequent the modern race course. It would be bad enough were it limited to that, but unfortunately it applies to almost every sporting centre with which gambling is associated.

(2) SPORT AND PROFESSIONALISM. The two spheres in which Englishmen have been most virile and virtuous are sport and commerce. Neither of these owes its utility and progress to gambling. Never in the world's history have games been so nobly and splendidly played as in the days of ancient Greece, but no gambling whatever attended them. The fact is that betting in connection with our splendid national games has lowered their standard,

¹*Spectator*, March 22nd, 1913.

and has turned our manly sports into professionalism. Instead of the game being played for its own sake, and with a view to promote a higher end, it is played for self-interest and money profit, because of the stakes which lie behind. Our football teams are made up of men who are bought for money regardless of sentiment or citizenship. The whole system is anti-social and anti-sporting, for true social and sporting life is unselfish and spontaneous. The true sportsman is always prepared for the best to win. He believes in the utmost for the highest. Now, betting and gambling are the antithesis of this, for as *Maeterlinck* says, "Gambling is the stay-at-home, imaginary, squalid and unlovely adventure of those who have never been able to encounter or create the real and salutary adventure of life. It is the feverish and unhealthy activity of the wastrel."

(3) INTELLECTUAL IDEALS. A well-known writer supposes a cultured noble-minded man suddenly forced to live with the occupants of some gambling den where he would daily associate with the "dregs" of the race course. He asks what would be the mental result? Shall we try to imagine? For one thing, we might well suppose he would be attacked by a moral and intellectual paralysis. Those who are conversant with the methods and manners of the gambling ring would not be surprised at this, for the gambler's outlook on life is the most contracted and most miserable thing imaginable. What is God and what is the world to him? What are the affairs of the State to the gambler unless, indeed, its policy touches his evil business? What does he care for

the nation's manhood seeing his chief business in life is to make money? The Empire is no concern of his for he pursues a trade which degrades national life and character. The beauty and dignity of things lovely, honest and of good report cast no spell over him. His eyes see bricks and mud, and his mind gropes after earth's lowest; for gambling unfits a mind for moral and intellectual pursuits. Those who know the bookmaker best are impressed with his low ideals. Read any of the sporting papers and you are at once struck by the vulgar style, coarse diction, and bad form, for few things can be more unsavoury than the record of some race meeting, where the race course is the object of a kind of fetish worship. The late Lord Grimthorpe once said to a young man who told him that he was going on the turf, "Go on the turf," said he, "my young friend, you had better go under it." When you consider the bad effect of gambling on the individual character, the advice of the old lawyer, although a little grim, was not exactly out of place.

(4) MORAL AND MENTAL OUTLOOK. Among teachers of morality Herbert Spencer was one of those who perceived that the evil of gambling cannot be successfully attacked until we realise that the act itself is essentially immoral. Undoubtedly, gambling has a very serious effect on moral character. It warps the will, sears the conscience and blinds the eyes of the moral understanding. I have known the moral judgment of the gambler become more hopeless than that of the drunkard. It was so, because the drunkard had sane and remorseful hours when he was

sober, but the gambler is constantly under the spell of a vicious habit and the control of an evil power. His moral declension is not a sequence of the years but it is with him from the first. His code of honour is in keeping with his character, for the winner is a miser, when having once won, he ceases to play, and the loser is a coward if he ceases to play having once lost : so both gamble on until the habit paves the way to despair. Visit some modern Monte Carlo and note its moral ruin. See the dismal beings—who have lost everything—emerge from the midnight gaming-tables and pass into the outer darkness. Watch their excited faces and mad gesticulations for they have lost not only money, but also their moral and mental balance. Moral paralysis is just as real as that of physical, and every year the curtain falls on numerous moral paralytics, who having gambled and lost, sought refuge in the despair of suicide. Here is the last letter of such an one :—“ I have undone myself, it is no use to conceal it from you, everything is gone—I am mad.” We can fill in the rest. Yes, we can catch the sad refrain of these words from hopeless victims in prison and asylum, whilst the grave in solemn silence can reveal the moral effect of the gambling evil. Some of us are familiar with the name of Captain Coe, the famous racing writer of the *Star*. I want to say a word about him, for in his Will, Coe forbade his own son to acquire the betting habit. He left his property and name to his son on the sole condition that he agreed not to gamble. What more evidence do we need as to the evil effect of gambling on character, when a man like

Captain Coe gives his "final" tip to all young men. Beware of betting and gambling!

(5) SPIRITUAL LIFE AND PROGRESS. It is serious that gambling arrests and kills spiritual life and progress. A public man told me the other day, "I consider gambling the enemy of every-day religion," whilst a well-known social reformer says, "I have seldom known an inveterate gambler reclaimed." Such is its power on the will and character of men. The chance of winning creates greed and avarice, and shuts out the thought of God and when these come in religion goes out. True idealism cannot live in a life where God is absent. The man who is always thinking of the race course cannot be thinking about the higher things of life. To be ransacking your brain how you may rob other people, is neither a noble purpose nor a worthy ambition. To fill your mind with the tipsters' news of to-morrow's racing and the pedigree of this or that "favourite" to secure a winning chance, is not the way to save your soul. Where the gambler's heart is, there is his treasure also. What a treasure it is! What is his life? At once you see his folly for he thinks not about the things that really matter. His is a life which thinks not about those around, and has no message of love and sympathy to lessen life's cares and sorrows—a life which cares nothing about the renewal of the social order, the honour of the nation, or the welfare of its homes—a life which knows nothing of that honest labour which throbs with joy in the thought of reward for work well done, and which can sleep in peace on the pillow of a clear conscience in the vision of a pure

heart—a life which is doing nothing to set the world right again and bring the Kingdom of God into the hearts of men. Such is the life of the gambler. He has cast aside responsibility. England, home and beauty are empty words to him. He ignores life's closest interests, wife and children ; what have they to say to him, while he studies the racing news through the day and under feverish anxiety dreams all night long of tips on horses for to-morrow's races ? When gambling gets hold of a man he is not much good afterwards, for he loses his moral bearings and ceases to see clearly. Could anything be worse ? What a career for a man made in God's image, with life's great possibilities before him ! What a tragedy to cast them all aside.

For he lives for himself,
He thinks for himself,
For himself, and none beside,
As if the Christ had never lived,
And as if He had never died.

GAMBLING AND RELIGION

“ If you say you are a Christian when you are a
dice player you say what you are not.”

Tertullian.

LECTURE VII

GAMBLING AND RELIGION

"Sin is the transgression of the law."

I John iii, 4.

IS gambling a sin? The question is not so easy nor yet so difficult as it appears. Intuitively the Christian conscience feels it is, but the difficulty lies in stating precisely and exactly in what the sin ultimately consists. There is always this great difficulty about moral questions, and yet perhaps the lack of a rigid definition of the gambling sin is not a spiritual loss. Christ did not discuss the Christian attitude to any particular game. He did not deal with the problems of modern society by any fixed formula, but He told us that questions of this kind must be decided by the standard values of the material and the spiritual. In the long run great moral questions must be decided by their influence on life itself. That which would exercise a bad effect on life's highest interests, or would become a barrier to the duty we owe to others, must inevitably be wrong.

Indeed, it is a matter for serious doubt whether anything would be gained for true religion by inscribing narrow lines to delimit sin. Suppose we map out our lives into sectors of good and evil, which are separated on this side or that, the arrangement might

interest the scholastic temperament, but such precise definitions are of little value to meet the needs of modern life.

(I) DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG. We need something bigger and better than stereotyped methods ; in short, what we need are the principles of Christ. Those who believe gambling to be a vicious thing will treat it as they would treat any other vice, by shrinking from its province, and shunning its presence. They would not wish to see how close they might get to the precipice without falling over. The narrow line between good and evil has little attraction for them. The fact that they just happen to stand on the right side of the line affords but little security. The reason for this lies in the meaning of the fact of sin. How often is sin but "missing the mark" ? What is it, but God's gifts gone astray in our use of them ? What is it but slavery and contraction of life ? In point of fact sin does not consist so much in any distinct act as in the condition of life from which the act proceeds. When a man begins to consider how far he can go toward the gambling habit before he encounters sin his moral tendency is downward. At the moment he is indulging in what is questionable and doubtful ; and when this takes place he is in serious danger. Not then, by close definitions or strict moral calculations about the line between good and evil, but by loyalty to Christ's principles, following after that which is good and avoiding the evil, is the safe and right way. Having the Spirit of Christ, interpreting the Sermon on the Mount by applying its principles

to modern life, we can dispense with these discriminations. Jesus taught that these do not exist at all in the outer sphere of life, but they do exist in the inward condition of the heart. (St. Matthew v, 27-37.)

From the Christian standpoint then, *this* is the case with gambling, although from the State aspect it is somewhat different; for the State may lay down laws with prohibitions which gambling may not disregard without paying the penalty, but these laws are enacted in the interest of society and are not the boundaries of sin. They are rather the results of public inquiry; statutes to mark out the crime, limitations beyond which the gambler cannot pass without injury to others. Though it is sometimes questioned, nevertheless the State has a perfect right to define its own idea of moral and social evil; but sin goes much deeper than any social disorder, for the sinful state of the soul precedes the public act of injury. (S. Matthew v, 28.) In matters of this kind we must carefully discriminate between the *habit* and the *trade*. No law can change a habit, but it can legislate to control a practice or a trade. The explanation lies in the fact that the habit is entirely moral and must be met on moral grounds, but the State can deal with the practice of the habit when it becomes a "trade" in order to protect society from its temptations and abuses.

(2) THE CHRISTIAN LAW AND PRINCIPLE. There is a spiritual law enunciated by Christ which settles the matter. He tells us "by their fruits ye shall know them" (St. Matthew vii, 16-20). Just as every good tree bringeth forth good fruit and every corrupt

tree bringeth forth evil fruit, so we shall know gambling by its fruit. Look at the fruit of gambling, whether it be at the race course, or elsewhere, and you will see what I mean. It does not matter whether your money is placed on horses or on the wheels of chance, you may know without mistake, whether the fruit is good or bad. What are some of these fruits? The selfish bookmaker, the profligate race frequenter, the desolated homes, the broken lives and the nameless suicides. It is computed that there are over 100,000 cases annually of "wastes and failures" through betting and gambling. We need not multiply cases nor search our imagination in order to see that there is no goodness whatever in a habit or trade with such terrible results. There are some people who tell me that it is not the gambling but the excess in gambling which matters. To play for big stakes beyond one's means (so they say), it is this that brings the misery. "Surely, an occasional gamble for small stakes will do nobody any harm, for what does it matter if we do lose so long as we do not gamble in excess." Now, you would be surprised to hear of a banker who told his clerks that they were not to steal to excess; it was all right to steal just a few pounds now and then but excess would bring them trouble. You cannot imagine this, and the reason is because there is no moderation in stealing, as it is a sin. Not the quantity but the quality of your action which matters, and such is the teaching of Christ. In matters of moral wrong large or small exists only in degree but not in kind. In size there may be difference between the petal and the flower, and the seed

and the fruit, but in kind they are the same. In fact, the fruit is determined by the seed ; for when the seed is good, the fruit is good also.

(3) GAMBLING IS ESSENTIALLY ANTI-SOCIAL. The question of private gambling where money stakes are placed upon whist drives and other private amusements, is one which people try to justify in all kinds of ways. I confess there may be minor difficulties here, for these chiefly belong to what we term the "social" rather than the moral side of the question. We are told that "money points" stimulate the game and you do no harm so long as the stakes are carefully arranged, when the losses may balance the gains and the gains the losses. This argument is deceptive if not positively dangerous. What right has the man who pleads that there is no harm in making the smaller bet to condemn the man who makes the larger ? Every gambler starts his career intending to keep his bets low, but the habit begets a craving which develops into greed and avarice.

What is true of public gambling is also true of private. Ruskin has said that "the object of education was not only to choose right things and to do them, but to enjoy right things." Private games are in themselves a right and healthy amusement or they are not. If they are right, why introduce the incentive of an unnecessary tonic ? If they are not, why play them at all ? Besides, when people argue in this manner they are begging the question ; for experience shows that where money is staked there arises an irresistible desire to win. Those who play may laugh and talk about the stakes being of no value

but is it so ? Do they mean what they say ? We are human enough to understand that the secret is the love of money, which is the root of evil. Whatever we may say, money has an enormous influence over every one of us. We may think it has not but when we begin to play for it we know. We may consider ourselves free from covetousness or avarice, but to every one who plays for points or "ponies" whether in private or public, then money becomes the incentive to the game. For this reason "*gambling is essentially anti-social, and an embodiment of selfishness is the very essence of sin*" (Bishop Westcott).

(4) CONTRADICTION OF LIFE'S GOLDEN RULE. Gambling is the contradiction of Christ's principle, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you even so do ye also unto them." (St. Matthew vii, 12.) Where can you find the exercise of this Golden Rule on the race course ? We know it does not exist there, for the gambler's practice is just the opposite. His method is to look after "Number One," to get knowledge, not that he may help others, but that he may rob them. His delight is to trade upon the simplicity and ignorance of those who do not know what they are in for. His object is self ; he cares nothing whatever about another's loss or ruin, so long as self is satisfied. His idea of reward is to get it, though this may entail injury to others. The gambler's method is part of a system which is destructive of the basic principles of social life ; in fact, the idea of making a transaction in order to get something for nothing is not only mischievous but is contrary to the fundamental law of living.

No life can be built up on such a principle.

(5) THE CREED OF A MODERN CHRISTIAN. A great Christian thinker shows that real life connotes "Whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true; think on these things." (Philippians iv, 8.) How does the gambling habit square with this? Surely the Christian creed cannot condone a trade which is really a scheme to possess your neighbour's money. Some people tell me that they have sufficient self-control to keep themselves from habitual gambling. Let us suppose that it is so and that your bets are limited. What about the others? What about the many weaker men and women who lack self-control? What about the homes where under the guise of hospitality young people who are invited to gamble, meet with tremendous temptation? Will your action or influence be a help or hindrance to them? What if it should be an occasion for sin? By condoning the habit either by large bets or small you are helping to injure them. It is not a Christian creed for a man who believes in the Cross of Christ to repeat that he is strong enough to gamble and get safely through although his action may be a stumbling block to others. I quite agree that the devil does not live in a stable or an ivory card nor is he necessarily a member of the Stock Exchange. He is not the promoter of the biggest concerns or the best amusements, which, as a matter of fact, can be carried on very much better without him. Why, then, does he trespass where he is not wanted? Believe me, the man who seeks to lower and vitiate our games and amusements by the

gambling habit is doing the devil's business. He is a "rank outsider" and trespasser, and commits the crime of poisoning the social and moral atmosphere by the microbes of an evil and alien force.

(6) THE TENDENCY OF ALL BETTING IS TO CREATE in the winner the spirit of greed and in the loser the spirit of despair. In the conflict of ideas sport is supplanted by selfishness; the winner inflated by success presses on to grasp more and the loser maimed by failure stumbles on in reckless disappointment. Chance, the gambler's name for god, sits as arbiter, and those who accept his control signify that they deny the very existence of God. The habit of gambling is a sin, for it is opposed to the moral principles of life. Belief in Chance and belief in God are contrary the one to the other.

"It is possible that a wise and good man be persuaded to gamble but it is impossible that a professed gambler be a good man."¹ The author of these words recognised that gambling is opposed to goodness; he saw its issues on moral life; he marked its tendency and observed its fruit and end. His conclusion is that gambling excludes not only from the society of good people, but from goodness itself. What is your attitude? When a Christian man sees a habit or force which is ruining his fellow men he ought to say, "In Christ's name, this must be stopped." When he goes out to fight it, he is reaching up to his highest, for he shows that he is his brother's keeper; "no man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself."

¹Lavater.

GAMBLING AND TAXATION

“Law is a rule of civil conduct, prescribed by the supreme power in a State, commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong.”

Blackstone.

LECTURE VIII

GAMBLING AND TAXATION

“ Destroy not him for whom Christ died.”

Romans xiv, 15.

A SELECT Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to consider the question of betting taxation, has issued its Report.¹ Much evidence has been taken and controversy provoked, but there is general opinion that the gambling habit is widespread and its tendency distinctly evil. No one, apparently wishes to tax and legalise betting and gambling for its virtuous character, but rather for its vice. This simplifies the matter. We have to consider whether it would be a desirable thing to legalise an evil and if so, would taxation be a practical remedy? Unquestionably the betting trade would welcome taxation, and that for obvious reasons. There was perfect candour with the bookmaker when he told the writer that he welcomed taxation, “ for it would be a grand thing for business.” On the other hand, a distinguished Dean² insists that he would tax betting and gambling in order to diminish it. With due respect, I am inclined to think the bookmaker is right, since the consensus of opinion among bookmakers is strongly

¹Blue Book, December, 1923.

²Rt. Rev. Dr. J. E. C. Welldon.

in favour of taxation, and my knowledge of these professional "traders" gives me a distinct prejudice in favour of their judgment in such a matter.

(1) THE CHALLENGE OF THE TRADE. Recently the trade threw down a challenge that at least one thousand bookmakers were ready to pay a tax of £1,000 a year each, and nearly as many turf agents were prepared to pay at least £500 a year. This will give you some idea of their view upon the subject. I profess, however, that I do not care to entertain a proposal which would legalise a practice which stands condemned on moral and economic grounds, and which is undoubtedly a violation of Christian principle, and a danger to the nation's welfare.

(2) THE CASE FOR THE OTHER SIDE. At the same time, I want to be fair, and to say all that can be said for the other side. There are some who are strongly opposed to betting and gambling, yet feel it expedient to support a taxation proposal. They recognise the enormous extent of the evil, and its bad effect upon social and religious life. They deplore its increase, but there the interest ends. They simply accept it as a permanent evil without a remedy, a disease which cannot be cured. They argue that it must remain, and under the circumstances, it is better that the State should tax it, and secure some of its proceeds for the national revenue.

There are others who contend, on John Stuart Mill's principle, that, since no one is compelled to gamble, we should not condemn it, and that taxing the habit and restricting the practice to gambling centres would in some measure regulate it. They

tell you that the gambler will play whether you like it or not, and that gambling under such circumstances would be carried on with greater fairness than under the present system. They advocate taxation in order that those who gamble may give advantage to those who do not. They argue that it is beyond our power to eliminate the habit, and, since it exists, it ought to contribute to the State, but that this can only be realised if the evil be openly recognised.

There are others still who argue, with some show of reason, that Great Britain, which derives a large revenue from the Drink Traffic, can produce no sound reason against gambling taxation. I am strongly opposed to the Drink Traffic, but I must confess that I cannot place making a bet and buying a glass of beer in the same category, for economically the cases are different. In the case of the bet all legitimate laws of labour and exchange are entirely ignored. In the case of the beer you get some equivalent for your money, indeed, some get too much !

I have tried to put the views of the other side as clearly as possible and to consider them sympathetically, but my conclusion is fully expressed in the words of a great and impartial historian,¹ who was an authority on moral questions, that "*These considerations go a small way as a counterpoise to the vast and terrible ruin, misery, and suicide, for which the public gaming establishments are responsible.*"

(3) THE CASUAL GAMBLER. It may be a fact

¹Mr. W. E. H. Lecky

that there are people with the gambling instinct who will find opportunities somewhere to satisfy it, but the modern Casino and gambling resorts attract thousands of people who never think of gambling at home. It is among these casual folk that the gambling disaster is most frequent. I have watched them enter the Casino unguarded and untaught. They become impulsive because they are inexperienced. They see others bet their money, and they follow suit, and when they begin to lose they are reckless. Last year at Aix-les-Bains (when acting Chaplain) I met several people who were "on the rocks," and had not sufficient money to take them home. They were first caught when visiting the Casino, and under ordinary conditions would not have gambled at all. So many begin at centres legalised for gambling, and the habit grows into the continued practice. *"It would be more to the point,"* says Lecky, *"if these gambling dens could be suppressed, which might not at first be an easy matter, but, when once done, it would remove great centres of infectious evil, and the distinct advantages of the removal would enormously outweigh the financial gain from taxation."*¹

(4) THE COMMISSION AND TAXATION. Turning to the evidence before the Special Commission it was plain that there was general agreement that gambling causes much pain and suffering. Experts gave it as their opinion that gambling was a greater source of crime than the Drink Traffic, and in order to counteract its evils, some suggested taxation and control.

¹*Democracy and Liberty.*

The Chairman¹ of the Board of Customs and Excise was emphatic that street bookmaking should cease, and that illegal betting would be diminished through taxation. In all seriousness let me ask, if we cannot control it now, what hope is there of doing so were betting legalised? It is not the way to remove a vice by condoning it and making it legal. Besides, the new proposed tickets will cost much more than the present street betting, and it is unlikely that the gambler will willingly choose that. The whole proposal carries the strongest moral objections, for it recognises gambling as a State asset, and *legalises* the gambler and his debts.

Having stated the taxation aspect let me now submit some reasons why betting taxation must be opposed.

(I) TAXATION WOULD STIMULATE THE HABIT. State recognition will undoubtedly promote it. At the best it is only a great financial adventure. No one seems to know how much or how little money taxation would bring. In any case the result would be an exceedingly small part of our annual budget. Is it wise to embark upon a course of uncertainty when we know that the *moral* issues are of the most grave character? Once you tax betting the State condones an evil and the nation is let down. Over a century ago when lotteries had been organised for State revenue and gambling was a recognised feature of national life, the dreadful waste of life and money spent upon it was the subject for a Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the

¹Sir George Hamilton.

whole matter. One would expect that as the gambling was organised by the State they would have carefully safeguarded it, instead of which it became a growing evil. The Report of that Committee may well be recalled at this present juncture. It unreservedly condemned the fraud and dishonesty of gambling as an enemy to industry and thrift. The Report said "That no mode of making money appears to the Committee so burdensome and pernicious: under no system of regulation which can be devised will it be possible for Parliament to adopt it as an efficacious source of revenue and at the same time divest it of all the evils which hitherto have proved so fruitful." Shortly afterwards Parliament abolished all gambling revenue for State purposes by the Lotteries Abolition Act (1823). Since then the State has not recognised gambling otherwise than as an evil. Will the supporters of gambling taxation please make a note of this?

(2) TAXATION WOULD LEGALISE THE BOOKMAKER. Betting houses proved the greatest evil during the earlier part of last century. They became so widespread that Parliament passed a special measure to suppress them. If you allow taxation the bookmaker will open registered betting offices, and he will appear a respectable member of society. The State will no longer frown but smile at the evil thing. His occupation is at once placed on a footing of relative respectability. Betting will increase tenfold, for there are crowds of people who do not bet now because it is illegal, but who will bet then. In fact, the bookmaker's business will rank alongside the honourable

and just trades and professions which promote the well-being of the nation. Morally, the bookmaker has no place in respectable Christian citizenship and according to the Apostolic dictum he stands outside the circle of honest labour, for he is not working "the thing that is good." (Ephesians iv, 28.)

(3) TAXATION WOULD REPEAL THE GAMING ACTS. At present gambling debts are irrecoverable by law. This exercises a certain control over the habit. If you remove this it will prove an incentive to gambling; besides, once cancel preventive laws and you will open the gates to all kinds of abuse. Why then not repeal the Street Betting Act, or why withhold full recognition from every form of gambling? It is illogical to permit the one and forbid the other. If you allow the principle surely the method is a secondary matter. In the House of Commons debate on Premium Bonds¹ the Chancellor of the Exchequer (the Right Honourable Austen Chamberlain) said, "*It is impossible for the State to encourage gambling in one form itself and prohibit it in all other forms.*"

(4) TAXATION WOULD HAVE A BAD MORAL EFFECT UPON THE STATE. What will follow if gambling is taxed and the State itself takes a hand in this wretched business? In France all betting is carried on by means of the mechanical business known as *pari-mutuel*. In England it would probably be known as *totalisator*. The State may forbid betting anywhere except through its own machines or it may combine a percentage levy on the bets with a licence and taxing of the bookmaker. In either case the

¹December 1st, 1919.

State is working a vice and by so doing it creates an impression that there is nothing wrong in betting. How will this act upon the moral standard of the nation, for increase is assured when the State favours it ?

(5) TAXATION WOULD PROVE A FAILURE. Where taxation has been tried the result has been the same. The cure has been considerably worse than the disease. New Zealand forty years ago thought taxation a remedy, but they made a painful discovery. One effect has been to make betting respectable and no jury would convict a gambler on the ground that he did what the Government had sanctioned. The racing authorities assured the nation that taxation would remove and abolish the abuses of gambling ; the result has been that, *betting being made easy*, gambling increased in volume and bookmakers multiplied. Again, the nation demanding reform, new restrictions were made and bookmakers licensed, but the result has been a terrible failure. A New Zealand journalist visiting this country, told the writer some months ago that the remedy is tenfold worse than the malady, and the last state of the country is much worse than the first. Last year the gambling revenue represented £10 per head for every man, woman and child in that country. These facts do not encourage taxation.

In the highest interest of the nation, and for the sake of our moral character, let us touch not this tainted source for national revenue. No Christian nation can afford to legalise vice. If we need the money let us give ourselves to honest industry and

thrift, and in God's name let us harness our energies and use our powers to defeat this moral and social evil. To use the words of a great democratic paper¹ which has done much to promote a high moral tone in our press, "The plain truth is that gambling whatever form it takes is a criminal business, and the only relation the State should have towards it should be that of restricting to the utmost its power and its abuse."

¹*Manchester Guardian.*

GAMBLING AND REFORM

“ When a scientist is face to face with a great difficulty,
he is also face to face with a great discovery.”

Lord Kelvin.

LECTURE IX

GAMBLING AND REFORM

“ For God hath given us the Spirit, not of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.”

Timothy i, 7.

THE moral and social evil of gambling is most apparent to those engaged in religious and social service, for they have special opportunities of observing its influence on moral character. The result is that no Christian-social worker can possibly be content with the present condition of things. In previous lectures we have weighed gambling in the scale of history and found it wanting. We have watched its serious growth and marked its vicious effect upon social, economic and commercial life. That gambling when tested by the principles of Christ is a sin we cannot doubt; for when measured by Christ's teaching and its moral effect upon human character it stands condemned. With such facts before us we could not honestly support taxation. To do so (as we have seen), would legalise gambling for the sake of financial gain, and exploit a national vice under the misconception of promoting a virtue. This is the position at present, and it is one which demands our serious thought and prayer. Every Christian patriot, every lover of his country, every one who believes in a golden future of some kind should feel compelled to remedy the evil by attempting some solution. We must not forget

that it is much easier to be destructive than constructive. It is not so difficult to explain the problem and to diagnose the causes which lie behind, as it is to introduce the right corrective and to propose the right solution. Here we meet our real difficulty. We are grateful for everything that social reformers and politicians are trying to do. We are anxious to work with them for the common good ; but let us remember there is no short and smooth road to reach the goal. Like all great questions, it will take time and patience, for we are dealing with a serious matter. The solution must not be a negative one ; mere repression will not do. The problem demands something positive and reconstructive, and will tax the best minds of the nation. But I am convinced that forces can be generated, and powers can be created, which will limit and control it. Undoubtedly it may require action along several lines related to other social problems. In this respect it cannot be fully considered by itself alone, but in relation to other problems and questions. I venture, therefore, to propose certain lines of reconstruction in which I have faith enough to expect a measure of solution.

(I) CAREFUL STUDY AND WISE REFORM : THE LEGAL ASPECT OF THE SUBJECT. Reconstruction is needed, but it will require more than this, for legal powers cannot change a habit. On the other hand, they can do much to limit its influence. When it has become a trade (for instance) the law can attack and limit what we call the " moral " side of gambling as evidenced in organised forms of betting. But there is also the social side which is seen in the sweep-stake and whist drive habit so frequently connected

with social life. These may need treatment of a somewhat different kind. It may be well to keep in mind, however, that the State laws with regard to gambling did not appear in the first instance to arise out of regard to the moral side of the question. For instance, an edict was issued by Edward III against gaming because people were not sufficiently favouring "*the noble sport of war*"; and a statute of Henry VIII was intended to put down gaming in favour of the practice of archery. This will account for some strange anomalies in certain Gaming Acts which are still in operation and sometimes enforced. The fact is, they were enacted for one purpose and they have been used to serve another. The truth is, that the moral and ethical judgment of the nation has gone far beyond its legal expression and has advanced into new regions of thought. For this reason we must begin with inquiry and careful revision of these legal statutes in order that we may arrive at reconstruction.

(2) THE PRESS AND RACING NEWS. Reform is needed with regard to the Press. The great publicity given in our newspapers to racing news and gambling advertising needs careful reform. The power of the Press is greater to-day than ever before, and for this reason it can serve the greatest good or may promote the most serious evil. It is well known that there are certain evening papers which could not exist apart from the racing news. You have only to watch the earlier editions, with their latest "finals," and you will notice crowds, not only of men, but of women, who are anxiously waiting for the news. See the edition of the afternoon or the evening paper bearing

the first news of some well known racing event,¹ and you will observe how quickly the edition is bought up. Get into a train and watch the people who read the seven o'clock edition and you will find they are studying the betting columns. There are, however, many notable exceptions among the Press, and it is a pity that the racing craze should be allowed to lower the reputation of this great public service. But as society suffers most from its smallest men, so the Press reputation suffers most from its gambling editions. For the sake of the power and purity of the Press there should be a law to control defaulters. It is a wise precaution taken in some of our great public reading rooms by blocking out all betting news, and it is encouraging to observe that this is the case respecting some of our great industrial centres.

(3) EQUALITY OF TREATMENT. There must not be preferential treatment. At the present time the law is unsatisfactory. It is inconsistent and anomalous, for it admits betting on the race course but forbids it in the street, whilst it takes no active steps to suppress betting openly carried on in high places. If there is one thing that is disagreeable to the English temperament it is to have one law for the rich and another for the poor. Why should the man "arrayed in his purple and fine linen" drive down to Newmarket or the Derby, and under the indulgence of the law bet as much as he likes? In contrast to this, the poor man who makes a bet at the street corner, if caught he is taken to the police station

¹"When gambling habits prevail, the newspaper, which should be the guide of the citizen, is read, not for its politics, but for its tips." Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., Prime Minister (*Gambling and Citizenship*).

and next morning stands charged before a magistrate on the count of gambling, because of obstruction. This glaring inconsistency should be set right and rich and poor alike be brought under the same law. Moreover, as the law stands gambling transactions become a "trade," and no one should be allowed to make a living by such a sordid business.

(4) AMENDMENT AND CLARIFICATION. The law should be clarified and codified with reasonable reform. In many points it requires to be straightened and strengthened. At present it is unsatisfactory through lack of codification of Statutes and revision of their meaning ; for old Acts are frequently used on grounds differing from that for which they were framed. In this respect we need their amendment. Just before the War some valuable amendments¹ were proposed which deserve attention, and but for the War I have no doubt they would have become law. Why not re-introduce or embody them in a new measure for each of them represents a valuable step towards reform? The *first*² was the extension of the Act of 1853 and was introduced into the House of Lords with regard to publishing, writing, printing, or circulating any betting advertisements. The *second*³ was introduced to prohibit the prize competitions carried on by newspapers ; it was one of the results of the 1908 Select Committee. The *third*⁴ was introduced into the House of Commons to prevent ready money betting on football matches and the coupon system. The *fourth*⁵ was to prevent the using

¹1912-1924.

²Lord Newton.

³Lord Loreburn (*Lord Chancellor*).

⁴Mr. Hayes Fisher, M.P.

⁵Rt. Hon. C. E. Hobhouse, M.P.

of His Majesty's Post Office for betting business, and was introduced into the House by the Postmaster-General. Reform on these lines would go a long way to diminish the betting evil. The Press and the Post Office provide perhaps the principle means of access for betting purposes to people of all classes. The gambling increase is in a large measure due to these agencies.

(5) STATE EDUCATION. Education is necessary. It is strange that the State, with its full knowledge of the extent of the betting evil, is doing nothing to educate the children to withstand its temptations. Why should there not be a series of lessons on the gambling evil given in our schools? The children should be taught its causes and effects, for they grow up quite ignorant of both these things. They accept it as the normal condition, and have no idea of the evil of the habit. This matter is of the most urgent importance. The boys and girls are not being fairly treated. For instance, in a certain school, the day after the *Derby*, the teacher of a large class gaily informed the children what horse she had backed and the money she had won. We have no doubt but that the children went home with a decided bias for betting. I think you will agree that this was not the teacher's business in a rate-provided school. Yet it is done! It would be money well spent to impart such education on the subject as to guard their future, for it is better to save life than to lose it. I should prefer spending £5,000,000 a year in such education, rather than receiving twice that sum from taxation. Ultimately it would be a gain both morally and financially to the Exchequer.

(6) A POSITIVE POLICY. Of all social evils the gambling problem requires not merely a policy of repression but something tremendously positive. After all, this would be most effective. In discovering the causes which lie behind gambling we cannot omit the conditions of life. Environment affects character, sometimes involving such unwholesome conditions as to produce moral and social evils. You have observed the false contentment of the drunkard living in the squalor produced by the Drink Traffic, and the *ennui* of the drug victim produced by the misery of the drug habit. Likewise with the dull and drab monotony of bad social conditions which were never meant for humanity ; such as overcrowded, badly ventilated and insanitary buildings ; lack of space for ventilation and unemployment ; which foster a low estimate of the meaning of life and work. These are some of the hidden causes of the betting evil.

(7) LET US USE OUR PERSONAL INFLUENCE. This is by no means the least. Legal action and social reform are undoubtedly needed, but the personal equation must not be overlooked. Life is a school where we are both teachers and scholars. What a great opportunity is afforded in modern life ! Think of all the modern movements—what an enormous field for personal influence should we find in these ! Think of the League of Nations with its world-wide membership and machinery to deal with social and moral evils. Think of the great movement for Christian Internationalism which is going forward under the Christian leadership of those who are working for the world's international peace. What unparalleled opportunities to influence public opinion against the

betting evil ! Take, for instance, the great labour movement¹—the co-operative society—C.E.M.S.—The Copec²—Y.M.C.A.—Y.W.C.A.—and many social organisations, not forgetting juvenile associations. These and others provide great opportunities for our personal influence. Those who believe in religious and social reform must keep in the closest touch with them. We cannot get on without one another. They may become valuable instruments in realising God's Kingdom.

(8) THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE. We need the Christian conscience. People take part in things that are illegal and doubtful because they do not possess the light of a Christian conscience which can discern things that differ and right what is wrong. There is the question of the use of money ; a question so closely allied with that of betting, and many people have a wrong idea as to its acquisition and use. We must learn to see that money is a sacred thing, and that when we use it with a sense of Divine stewardship we cannot possibly gamble for money. We must free ourselves from everything involved in bad principle. But to do this we need the Spirit of Jesus Christ to give the right motive and power, to inspire us with the high ideal of a strong Christ-like service, which the times demand, if we are to deal effectually with the social evil of betting and gambling.

¹“Every labour leader I know recognises the gambling spirit as a menace to every form of labour party.” Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., Prime Minister (*Gambling and Citizenship*).

²Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship.

GAMBLING AND CHRIST

“ It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world
an ideal character which has shown itself capable of
acting on all ages—nations—temperaments—conditions.”

Lecky.

LECTURE X

GAMBLING AND CHRIST

“None of us liveth unto himself; and no man dieth unto himself.”

Romans xiv, 7.

CHRIST did not issue a code of laws for human conduct; He gave men great moral and spiritual principles which they should apply for themselves. These principles set up standards which are simply absolute, and they cut off all escapes and pretexts; for they teach standards as standards, and demand that right is right and wrong is wrong. They are so, quite irrespective of our ideas about them. In questions of moral wrong we find no place for the modern use of the law of expediency. Parliaments have frequently committed themselves to this, but this law of sacrificing a right principle in order to justify a moral wrong is not a Christian one nor can it find any support in the Christian ethic. It was the law of *expediency* which crucified Christ; “It is expedient for us that one man should die for the nation” (St. John xi, 50) so said Caiaphas, the High Priest, in that fateful year. There are Christian people who desire to give recognition to the moral evil of gambling and to grant it public respectability for the sake of expediency. This is a position which

the Christian Church cannot accept. If we are to deal with the moral evil it must be upon Christian principles, for no problem of this kind can find its solution merely along legal and social lines. Gambling is a moral and spiritual wrong and needs to be faced in the Christian spirit, and the first step towards real reform must come in this way. We shall try and indicate some lines of definite Christian action other than those of a social and judicial aspect.

(I) A NEW CHRISTIAN OUTLOOK. In modern times reformers have written much about the "social conscience," but the preliminary of such a conscience is the "Christian conscience." Society must be regenerated by those who have the spirit of Christ. It is this alone which can give the new social conscience and bring in the new social order. This new perception of seeing things in their right perspective makes an enormous difference. We get a clear vision of the facts of life whereby we can interpret their meaning; then we see the distinction between moral right and moral wrong. Let us take, for example, the financial question which undoubtedly exercises primary influence in the sphere of gambling. The light of a Christian conscience can transfigure wealth into a sacred trust. Money would then become an altogether different thing. What about the desire of avarice? What about the spirit of covetousness and the curse of greed? What about the desire to be rich irrespective of righteous methods? What about getting wealth regardless of those who suffer? These things are condemned by Christian principle and are opposed to the right

place and use of all wealth. Get the Christian conscience to work and there can be no greater condemnation of the gambling evil. Christ's principles and the betting evil cannot exist together. The elements of gambling are undoubtedly opposed to God's Kingdom. All who pray and work for its coming and who acknowledge Christ's claim must be opposed to gambling.

(2) THE CHURCH AND PUBLIC OPINION. There is very little religious education given upon the gambling question. It is much discussed, but there are not many who think seriously about it. Not infrequently it is treated as a kind of jest and the real danger lies concealed. It is a great thing to give it publicity that it may be seen in its true nature. A great advance has been made to counteract disease by education and the introduction of new forces making for health. Here is a great moral evil which we call gambling. It is the business of the Church as well as that of the State to assist the community to efface it. This will not be done by minimising the evil. We must show to the community the vicious character of the thing until people see that it is a national and spiritual enemy. Then, and not till then, will they determine to fight it. Why not make it part of our religious curriculum that the rising generation may be prepared against its snares and temptations? What an extraordinary opportunity is presented in the work of the Bible Class, study circle, school, Communicants' guild, and the many various organisations of the Christian Church? What are we doing to grasp these opportunities and to appreciate the

greatness of their value? Spiritual energy and effort spent in this way would exercise a remarkable influence in safeguarding moral and spiritual character. Thousands of young people gamble because they have not been warned against its dangers. A preventive ministry in this matter is really more valuable than a redemptive one. A short time ago a young fellow was convicted of dishonesty, and in the dock—when charged—he told the magistrate on the Bench that he first learned gambling (which was the cause of his downfall) at a Church Institute where cards were played. The Christian Church above all others must set an example. She cannot educate public opinion so long as gambling is permitted for the purpose of raising money for spiritual work, or of providing excitement for young people. Surely, this is not the Church's business and we question whether it should have any place whatever in her mission and message. It is not fair to blame the crowd outside, if the Church is setting a bad example within. How seldom we hear sermons from the pulpit on this question! Why not? For what subject could be more instructive or painfully practical? Surely, it is a modern question and one which would always claim attention, particularly at a time like the present. The fact is that the Christian pulpit is not educating public opinion as fully as it ought. The apathy associated with the evil could not possibly exist if the Church were alive to her great possibilities.

(3) RECKON GAMBLING AN EVIL. We must treat gambling as a degenerating influence. Society must

be protected, and social life which stands on the basic progress of the centuries, must be freed from the vice. It has been, and is, a serious danger to the whole fabric of civilisation. It is noteworthy that there are few examples of sacrifice and devotion to duty in the gambler's life. On the contrary there is a marked lack of self-denial and unselfishness in the gambling circle; everything there is ostentatious, selfish, and sensual. It is high time that a halt were called to the degradations of betting rings and night clubs; for something drastic should be done to restore those sacred sanctions which rule human conduct and give a living force to public life.

(4) REMEMBER JESUS CHRIST. Bring the gambler to Jesus Christ. We are in a world which is a field for training, a school for education. We have to fight "the good fight" to win the victory. Who is sufficient for this? There are millions to-day who find in Christ the secret of power and the pathway of victory. It was a great saying of St. Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who is my strength" (Philippians iv, 13). Here is the message of living hope and potent possibility. Jesus Christ can save the gambler. What are we doing then to bring the gambler into touch with Him? We must take Christ's way and save him from the vice's power. No man who has seen the Christ can live the gambler's life. This is not the time for a do-nothing policy. We must work from a sense of duty, with a view to action being taken. What should Parliament do to control or suppress it? What will the Empire have to say about it? What must the Church, which

should be the *lifeboat* and *lighthouse* of humanity, do to save the perishing? I plead for the tempted and the fallen: for those who through the evil find it a harder thing to live than to die. I plead for those who find it impossible to resist the evil; those who have lost life's noblest ideal, and who need saving from impending ruin. Can we help them by "taking away the stone" from the grave of buried hopes, that they may come forth into a new, strong life, and set them free to enjoy God's great gifts of life and love? Those who love God and their fellow men will not stop to question or quibble about gambling. Its scope cannot be settled by any subtle analysis for it is a moral wrong, a sin, and for this reason a Christian nation must deal with it as such. To refuse to do this would accentuate a moral selfishness which finds no place in Christianity.

Right is right since God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.

(5) CHRIST'S IDEAL AND THE GAMBLER'S. The question is, which ideal are we prepared to accept? What is the gambler's Ideal? It is the serving and pleasing of self at the expense of others. Are you prepared to copy this example? What is Christ's Ideal? It is the sacrifice of self to save and uplift others. Does not this appeal to us? On the day of Calvary the Roman soldiers gambled beneath the Cross, for they knew no better. We are living on the side of Calvary where the light of the Cross of Christ has been shining through the ages. Yet there are

multitudes of men and women, who ought to know better, who are gambling beneath it still, too often alas, we say it to our shame, in sheer thoughtlessness and ignorance.

The Call comes to us to make our choice, to enlist in the great Crusade ; and to take our share in doing good and fighting this evil. Wake up, England ! Land of truth and ancient story. Wake up, Christendom ! Arise ! shine, for thy light has come. The Living Christ can give you power to conquer wrong and lead you on to victory.

He has sounded forth His trumpet that shall never call
retreat

Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer, be jubilant, my feet,
For God is marching on.

SUMMARY OF BETTING AND GAMBLING ACTS

I—GAMBLING AND LOTTERIES

- 1699.—The lottery system has a long history. The first Acts in the seventeenth century made it a public offence. Several Acts to repress it were passed in the eighteenth century ; but all lotteries were finally abolished in the beginning of the nineteenth century.
- 1802.—Little-Go Act directed against certain games and imitations of public lotteries, commonly called “ Little-Goes.”
- 1823.—Lottery Abolition Act, abolishing all lotteries, including those carried on for State purposes.
1836. Lotteries Act. Under this Act it became an offence to print or publish an advertisement in relation to any foreign lottery.
- 1835.—An Act dealing with notes of exchange given for gambling debts. These were declared to be given for an illegal purpose, and the object of the Act was to protect third parties.
- 1846.—The Art Union’s Act, whereby forms or associations incorporated by Royal Charter may distribute works of art by the method of lottery.

Lotteries have been defined as a distribution of prizes by lot or chance, which chance may be determined by physical means or arbitrary choice. In 1908 a Committee of both Houses made a careful enquiry into the Lottery Acts. The modern problem was prize competitions. (a) The Committee was of opinion that under existing Acts it was quite possible to determine between speculative and skilful competitions. (b) It was considered desirable to strengthen the law with regard to Press Competitions. (c) Missing-word competitions were declared illegal. (d) Premium Bonds of foreign corporations under certain conditions, were declared to be illegal as lotteries.

II.—GAMBLING IN PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES

1873.—Vagrant Amendment Act, enacted against playing or gaming for money in public places. This Act covers all kinds of automatic machines in public places or railway carriages.

1906.—Street Betting Act, directed against persons frequenting or loitering in any public place on behalf of himself or any other person for the purpose of bookmaking, betting, wagering, paying or receiving or sending bets. This Act covers distribution of coupons for football betting, the police having the power to arrest such persons without a warrant.

1893, 1901.—Library Acts. Any person betting or gaming in a public library or reading room to

become liable. The 1901 Act enables the authorities to exclude and remove such persons from use of the library or reading room.

III—GAMBLING AND GAMING HOUSES

1845.—The Gaming Act was aimed at houses, shops, and offices where people resort together for the purpose of gambling, the owner and those who share in the management being liable to a penalty of £100 or six months' imprisonment.

1854.—The Gaming Houses Act strengthened the police power to enter suspect houses. The Police Act of 1839 enacts that all persons found in such premises in the London area without lawful excuse are liable.

IV—GAMBLING AND ADVERTISING

1853, 1874.—The Betting Act made it illegal to publish advertisements of a betting house. This was extended (1874) to any circular, telegram or advertisement containing an invitation to betting in any place used for this purpose. Unfortunately the principle is restricted, as it is held to be applicable only to houses defined by the 1853 Act, otherwise all racing news in the papers would be illegal. The matter came up for consideration in 1897 and it appeared that a race course enclosure did not come within the Act although a "stool and bookmaker's umbrella" constituted a "place" and were within the meaning of the Act.

V—GAMBLING AND LICENSED PREMISES

1910. The Licensing Act (Sect. 79) was enacted against gambling on licensed premises, and the licensee keeping open or using the premises in contravention of the Act of 1853. If he is proved liable, and a conviction is recorded against him, his licence can be removed. This acts as a useful deterrent.

VI—GAMBLING AND CONTRACTS

1892. According to the 1845 Act contracts made by word of mouth or writing are void and null and you cannot legally recover the money. This was amended by the Betting and Loans Act (1892), by which agents cannot maintain an action in respect of services. The results of these Acts are to render void all forms of gambling and to prevent the recovery of money.

1845.—Certain Stock Exchange speculation also is void if it is shown that the transaction was a "time bargain."

1892.—Betting and Loans (Infants) Act protects persons under eighteen years of age from papers sent by bookmakers with invitations to borrow money and to bet. It is necessary of course to prove that the person sending knew the age of the person to whom he sends, unless sent to a place of education and learning.

VII—GAMBLING AND OTHER ACTS

- 1879.—(a) According to an Act of 1879 no racing can be held within ten miles radius of London, unless on race courses duly licensed.
- 1914.—(b) The Bankruptcy Act of 1914 gives power to the Court to refuse an order for discharge if it can be proved that the bankrupt brought on his bankruptcy by gambling or chance speculation.
- 1922.—The Gaming Act of 1922 (repeals Section 2 of the Act of 1835) by “ which makes money paid to the endorsee holder or assignee of securities given for consideration arising out of certain Gaming transactions recoverable from the person to whom the securities were originally given, and enacts that no action for the recovery of money under that Section shall be entertained in any Court.”

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